

About 1 in 10 Delaware Adults Have Been Diagnosed With Diabetes

In 2017, **11.3 percent** of Delaware residents age 18 and older reported they had been **diagnosed with diabetes**.

That means more than **85,400 Delaware adults** know they have diabetes, according to the Delaware Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS). This prevalence does not include gestational diabetes. Although the BRFS question does not distinguish between type 1 and type 2 diabetes, the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse estimates that between 90 and 95 percent of people with diabetes have type 2.

Trend in Adult Diabetes Prevalence in Delaware

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
9.7%	9.6%	11.1%	11.1%	11.5%	10.6%	11.3%

Source: Delaware Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS), 2011-2017.

There has not been any statistically significant difference in the adult diabetes prevalence during the past seven years.

In 2017, there were no differences between racial groups: **11.6 percent of non-Hispanic African-American adults** and **11.2 percent of non-Hispanic Caucasian adults** were diagnosed with diabetes. About **9.7 percent of Hispanic adults** report having been diagnosed with diabetes.

Diabetes also becomes **more prevalent with age**. Only 2.7 percent of 18-44 year olds have diabetes, but the prevalence rises to 10.9 percent among adults age 45-54; 16.8 percent among adults age 55-64; and 23.4 percent among those 65 and older. There is no statistically significant difference between men (12.1 percent) and women (10.5 percent) in the 2017 survey results.

Pre-Diabetes

The survey asks about "pre-diabetes," or borderline diabetes. In 2017, among adults who do not have diagnosed diabetes, **12.2 percent**—or more than 85,100 Delawareans—reported being told they have pre-diabetes.

People with pre-diabetes are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes, but they can significantly **reduce that risk by increasing physical activity and eating a healthier diet.**

Compliance with Recommendations

The 2017 Delaware BRFs also provides information about compliance with recommendations for people with diabetes.

- **60.4 percent** say they check their blood glucose (sugar) levels one or more times per day. [The recommended frequency is three times a day for most diabetic adults.]
- **33.8 percent** see their doctor 4 or more times a year. An additional 35 percent say they see their doctor 2 or 3 times a year.
- **92.0 percent** say they have been checked by a doctor for Hemoglobin A1-C one or more times in the past year.
- **76.9 percent** of people with diabetes had an eye exam in which their pupils were dilated during the past year.
- **15.8 percent** of people with diabetes said they have been told by a doctor that diabetes has affected their eyes, or they have retinopathy.
- **80.9 percent** said a health professional had checked their feet for sores or irritations one or more times in the past year.
- Half (**50.4 percent**) of all adults diagnosed with diabetes say they have taken a course or class in how to manage diabetes.

Weight and Diabetes

Overweight and obesity are major contributing factors for developing diabetes. In Delaware, **19.6 percent** of adults who report being obese have been diagnosed with diabetes, compared with **6.1 percent** of adults who report normal weights. About **83.5 percent** of adults with diagnosed diabetes are either overweight or obese.



Obesity among Delaware adults more than doubled from 13 percent in 1992 to **31.8 percent** in 2017. The prevalence of diagnosed **diabetes among Delaware adults also doubled** from 4.9 percent in 1991 to 11.3 percent in 2017. However, prevalence of both obesity and diabetes has been fairly level for the past several years.

Demographic factors for diabetes closely parallel the factors related to overweight and obesity. Adults with lower educational levels and low income have a higher prevalence of obesity and diabetes. Diabetes prevalence is higher in Kent and Sussex counties, where obesity prevalence also is higher than in New Castle County (see chart below).

2017 Diabetes Prevalence by County

State	New Castle	Kent	Sussex
11.3%	10.1%	13.1%	12.6%

2017 Obesity Prevalence by County

State	New Castle	Kent	Sussex
31.8%	29.3%	38.5%	32.6%

Source: Delaware Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS), 2017.

Disabilities and Diabetes

About 30.4 percent of Delaware's adult population report having activities limited by a physical, mental or emotion problem, or having a health problem that requires them to use special

equipment (such as a cane, wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone). However, **among people diagnosed with diabetes, 46.9 percent report having a disability.** About 17.3 percent of all adults with a disability say they have been diagnosed with diabetes.

Depression and Diabetes

About 17.9 percent of Delaware's adult population report being told having a depressive disorder including depression, major depression, dysthymia, or minor depression. **Among people diagnosed with diabetes, 21.1 percent report having a depressive disorder.** About 11.9 percent of all adults with a depression say they have been diagnosed with diabetes.

